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FOREIGN REACTION TO CLOSING OF TURKISH NATIONALISTS SOCIETY

The following information presents two articles, one from the 21 February 1953 issue of The Day-Jewish Journal of New York and the other from the 27 February 1953 issue of the Cairo daily newspaper al-Misri.

It is interesting to note the different slants of the two articles, both of which discuss the Turkish Nationalists Society. The Day-Jewish Journal editorial, datelined New York, 21 February 1953 characterizes the society as anti-Semitic and states that Turkey abolished the society because its anti-Semitic nature posed a threat to the unity of the Turkish people. Turkish press available to FDD, however, would indicate that the society was abolished because of its strong opposition to Ataturk's reforms, and that its anti-Semitic tendencies were considered by the government to be only of minor importance.

On the other hand, the al-Misri article, datelined Istanbul, 27 February 1953 and written by Bakri an-Nasir, appears to confuse the arrests made in connection with the Yalman affair with those made in connection with the closing of the Turkish Nationalists Society. The al-Misri article further states that one of the secret objectives of the Turkish Nationalists Society was the overthrow of the government. This statement is not supported in any of the Turkish press available to FDD.

The Turkish Nationalists Society was abolished by the government on 22 January 1953 (for further information regarding dissolution of Turkish Nationalists Society and events leading up to it

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MEASURES OF TURKISH GOVERNMENT AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM -- New York, The Day-Jewish Journal, 21 Feb 53

The Democrat Party now in power in Turkey has expelled 30 of its members who belonged to the abolished anti-Semitic Turkish Nationalists Society. It is noteworthy that two of the outcasts were deputies to the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

Turkey has certainly come a long way from the Jewish persecutions of World War II to her present vigorous action against anti-Semitic agitators. Turkey has learned a great deal and can now be regarded as a certified member of the Western democratic camp, which views anti-Semitism not only as a danger to the Jews but also as a danger to world peace.

It was quite appropriate that Turkey's Premier, in a recent speech to the public, strongly asserted that anti-Semitism threatens to disrupt the unity of the Turkish people and warned Turkish anti-Semites to consider seriously what had happened to Hitler's Germany. At this time, when the entire Soviet bloc countries have undertaken an anti-Semitic campaign and consider wild agitation against the Jews as the official policy of their governments, such words by Turkey's Premier merit attention. Although it is felt that the so-called "Peoples' Democratic" regimes will not heed the warning of the Turkish Premier, nevertheless such warning had to come.

TURKISH SOCIETY CONSPIRES TO OVERTHROW GOVERNMENT -- Cairo, al-Misri, 27 Feb 53

There is an important political movement in Turkey today, aimed at exterminating a suspicious political society, the Nationalists Society, which has been hiding at times under the guise of religion and has been threatening the country with great danger. Ever since the Democrat Party assumed power, it has encouraged religious societies, contrary to what the People's Republican Party has done since Ataturk's time until now.

This society, however, spread quickly and penetrated every place. It then became apparent that the society aimed at serious objectives not in line with government policy.

Some of the society's leaders were arrested, and many adherents were put on trial; its newspapers were suspended, and their editors were stopped from pursuing the journalistic profession. The government, meanwhile, submitted a memorandum to the Grand National Assembly, asking it to lift political immunity from a number of its members who belonged to this society.

The known objectives for which this society has been working are as follows:

1. Establishment of an Islamic bloc which would some day assume power in Turkey.
2. Working to achieve a world Moslem league which would enjoy the support and protection of all the Moslem states.
3. Waging a campaign against the Jews (who were accused by the society's publications as being "Islam's bitter enemies"), confiscating their property, and distributing such property among Moslem institutions.
4. Recognition of Islam as the state's official religion and working to achieve the aforementioned objectives in Turkey and the other Moslem states.

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There was nothing unusual about most of these announced principles. The secret objectives which this society was working for, however, were serious. The most important of these calls for a coup d'etat, assumption of power, reconstituting of the old Ottoman Caliphate, and ending most of the modern organizations and foundations of progress established by Ataturk and his colleagues since World War I.

It was discovered that the society had 80 branches throughout Turkey. All of these branches were closed by the administrative and parliamentary authorities. It was also discovered that the society was in firm contact with Iran's Fedayan-i-Islam.

After these incidents, the public prosecutor's office also arrested the president of the Islamic Democrat Party, the party for whose dissolution a decree had previously been issued but which continued its activities secretly. A number of other individuals suspected of being in contact with these societies and of financing them were also arrested.

Tevfik Ileri, Turkish Minister of Education, was accused of helping these societies. It is probable that he may resign at any minute if it is confirmed that his collaboration with these societies had bad intentions and unhealthy aims.

With the arrest of members of the Nationalists Society, the traces of the conspiracy which had been planned behind the scenes to effect a religious coup d'etat in Turkey have disappeared.

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